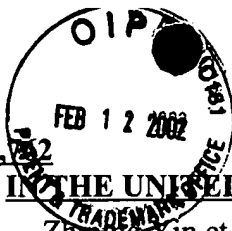


S/N 09/259,762



IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

PATENT

Applicant: Zhiping Yin et al.

Examiner: Jose Diaz

Serial No.: 09/259,762

Group Art Unit: 2851

Filed: March 1, 1999

Docket: 303.531408

Title: OXYGEN PLASMA TREATMENT FOR NITRIDE SURFACE TO REDUCE  
PHOTO FOOTING

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AMENDMENT AND RESPONSE UNDER 37 CFR § 1.111

Commissioner for Patents  
Washington, D.C. 20231

Applicant has reviewed the Office Action mailed on October 24, 2001. Please amend the above-identified patent application as follows.

IN THE CLAIMS

Please substitute the claim set in the appendix entitled Clean Version of Pending Claims for the previously pending claim set. The substitute claim set is intended to reflect amendment of previously pending claim 1. The specific amendments to individual claims are detailed in the following marked up set of claims.

1. (Amended) A method for reducing profile distortion in semiconductor fabrication without roughening a semiconductor substrate surface, comprising:

providing a semiconductor substrate comprising a film comprising silicon-nitride;

treating the film in a vacuum of about 3.0-6.5 Torr, for a time of about 10 seconds to about 5 minutes, and in an atmosphere comprising oxygen plasma wherein the oxygen plasma flow rate is at least about 300 sccm oxygen and the atmosphere [thereby] [renderings] renders the substrate resistant to profile distortion and roughening to make a treated substrate;

applying a resist to the treated substrate; and

patterning the resist.

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